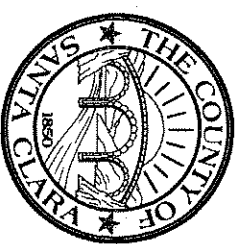


**County of Santa Clara**  
Social Services Agency

373 West Julian Street  
San Jose, California 95110-2335



December 1, 2008

California Department of Social Services  
Adoptions Service Bureau  
744 P Street, MS 8-12-31  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attn.: Carmen George

Dear Ms. George:

Enclosed please find Santa Clara County's Child Welfare Services Disaster Response Plan for 2008. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lori Medina, Social Services Program Manager III  
Administrative Support Bureau  
Department of Family and Children's Services  
Telephone: (408) 975-5697  
Email: [Lori.Medina@ssa.sccgov.org](mailto:Lori.Medina@ssa.sccgov.org)

Encl.: Child Welfare Services Disaster Response Plan

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

County & Agency Name: Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children's Services Date Completed: December 1, 2008

Name/Title: Lori Medina, Social Services Program Manager III  
Person Managing/Overseeing Emergency Plan Implementation

Telephone #: (408) 975-5697

E-mail Address: lori.medina@ssa.sccgov.org

This template is intended to be used as a guide to help counties incorporate the 2006 federal disaster response criteria as part of local child welfare plans. Minors in the probation system must also be included in the plan. County plans must be amended to include Child Welfare Services (CWS) Disaster Response Plans and be operational by September 28, 2007.

In September 2006, Congress passed the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law (PL) 109-288). PL 109-288 amended Part B of Title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Among other changes, PL 109-288 established requirements for states on disaster planning in child welfare under Section 6 (a) (16). Accordingly, counties are requested to address the following program areas in developing local disaster readiness plans.

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria A:</b>	<b>Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Identification and location process of children who may be displaced.
Process Description:	Emergency contact information is recorded on all children, families and caregivers. A weekly Emergency List-Conditions for Medically Fragile and some special needs children is published. This report include 4 tabs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1st Tab - Priority 1 is for Extreme Condition</li> <li>• 2nd Tab - Priority 2 is for Considerable Condition</li> <li>• 3rd Tab - Priority 3 is for Moderate Condition</li> <li>• 4th Tab for All Conditions</li> </ul>

	<p>Social Workers in the office are to be assigned the task of following-up with children in care. The Department will use the maps and rosters<sup>1</sup> to locate and check on the agency's foster children. Once contact has been made, Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) staff will assess the safety and well-being of the child, and if necessary, direct the family to disaster relief resources or remove the child from the family's care.</p> <p>A. Medically fragile children and those with special needs will be the first priority for SW contact. Staff will first attempt to make direct contact with each client on the Emergency Contact List to assess safety, need for emergency assistance and the need for alternative placement arrangements. If telephones are operational, clients will be assessed in the following order: those with Extreme (E) conditions, then Considerable (C), followed by Moderate (M).</p> <p>B. Staff unable to contact the client by phone will try to contact someone on the emergency contact list to assess the client's situation.</p> <p>C. Staff unable to make direct contact with the client, or the client's relatives or emergency contacts, will notify the police or fire department to request a welfare check on the client. Staff will provide the appropriate client information (name, address, phone, etc.) and report this action back to the office as soon as possible.</p>
Essential Function:	2. Communication process with child care providers
Process Description:	<p>DFCS staff will contact all of its child care providers to ensure the safety and well-being of the foster children within their care. Prioritized contact will be given to foster homes with medically at-risk foster children and/or those residing in the most disaster affected areas. Workers will first try to establish contact with foster families by telephone using GETS and WPS access, if necessary. If telecommunications are down or if after repeated attempts the family and its designated emergency contact are unreachable, workers will make home visits to verify the status of the foster children.</p> <p>Foster families evacuating the area are instructed to notify the Agency as soon as possible and to continually provide information about their whereabouts and how to contact.</p> <p>DFCS will be placing its Online Policies and Procedures (OPP) on the Internet. Disaster Response Plan information will be included in the OPP, including a general DFCS email address as an alternate avenue for contacting DFCS in case telephone systems are overloaded or inoperative. This will help prevent messages on absentee social workers' voicemail systems being unheard and enable the Agency to review messages from</p>

<sup>1</sup> The rosters will be in spreadsheet format and contain essential identifying information about foster children including children's names, addresses, phone numbers, caretaker names, and medically fragility.

	families once IT systems resume operations.
Essential Function:	3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance
Process Description:	<p>DFCS staff members will also make certain that foster care providers have and practice evacuation plans for the household (e.g., Emergency Plan for Foster Homes – LIC 610B or equivalent).</p> <p>DFCS staff members will be organized to contact children’s caregivers by telephone or in person, if necessary and feasible, to ascertain that the caregiver is aware of the pending event and has the means to take protective measures to ensure the safety of children in their care. Contact will be made according to these priorities: 1) caregivers of children with medical special need or special needs that should be accommodated in view of the anticipated event, 2) relatives, 3) non-relative extended family members, 4) county licensed foster parents, 5) FFA certified foster parents, 6) group home providers, 7) legal guardians, 8) ICPC placements (this may be a higher priority if the disaster is expected to more strongly impact another region in the country).</p> <p>All agency buildings will be assessed for potential structural damage in view of the anticipated event. If the Julian Campus Building II site is habitable, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be located on the 5th Floor, California Conference Room with support facilities in nearby conference rooms. If the Julian Campus Building II is not anticipated to be habitable and/or evacuation has been ordered, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be located in the Julian Campus Building I pending Building II being deemed uninhabitable. Should the entire Julian Campus remain uninhabitable for an extended period of time, the DFCS EOC will be moved to the Children’s Shelter.</p> <p>All staff members have been educated about their roles as Disaster Service Workers and will be alerted to the anticipated event and reminded to immediately report to their supervisor or the next available higher ranking manager at pre-designated alternative work locations if the anticipated event occurs. Some staff members may be released from duty in view of family or other emergency circumstances.</p>
Essential Function:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance
Process Description:	<p>DFCS staff members will also make certain that foster care providers have and practice evacuation plans for the household (e.g., Emergency Plan for Foster Homes – LIC 610B or equivalent).</p> <p>All agency buildings will be assessed for structural integrity following an event. All staff are expected to immediately report to their supervisor or the next available higher ranking manager at pre-designated alternative work locations if their worksite is not habitable. Some staff members may be released from duty to check on their families. If the Julian Campus Building II site is habitable, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be located on the 5th Floor-California Conference Room with support facilities in nearby conference rooms. However, if the Julian Campus Building II is not habitable and/or evacuation has been</p>

	ordered, the EOC will be located, on a short-term basis, in the Julian Campus Building I. Should the entire Julian Campus remain uninhabitable for an extended period of time, the DFCS EOC will be moved to the Children's Shelter.
Essential Function:	5. Identification of shelters
Process Description:	<p>Santa Clara County's Children's Shelter provides for the basic needs of children in temporary custody at the Shelter, including food, shelter, education, care and supervision, transportation, recreation and visitation with family members. Shelter facilities will be assessed for safety and capacity to house additional children. The CCL license capacity of the shelter is 132 children, but as many as 50 additional children could be housed at the Shelter if necessary (i.e., using cots, floors, etc.)</p> <p>During a major emergency, the DFCS will process the intake of unaccompanied minors and provide emotional support, nourishment, medical assessment/treatment, and crisis intervention/mental health assessment as needed. When parents, legal guardian or close relatives (grandparents, aunts, uncles or adult siblings) are identified and available, the child will be released to their custody.</p> <p>Shelter staff will identify additional staffing and other resources needed to expand operations. Foster caregivers will also be contacted to determine their ability to care for additional children. If the number of displaced children exceeds capacity, the Department will work with the Red Cross to identify additional sites. Sites will be operated by Department staff with Red Cross training in shelter operations.</p> <p>DFCS has a core of staff volunteers trained in shelter operations who may be dispatched to assist the Red Cross if the need for care and shelter services exceeds Red Cross capacity.</p>
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures
Process Description:	Following a disaster, the Department will make reasonable efforts to contact the biological parents of the Agency's foster children and provide information about the status of their children as it becomes available.
Essential Function:	7. Alternative processes for providing continued services
Process Description:	Following a disaster, CWS offices will likely be unable to meet all State and Federal regulations within mandated timeframes, and the courts may be temporarily closed and thus unable to issue orders and waivers needed by local CWS agencies. Furthermore, multiple counties are likely to be affected by the disaster and it would be inefficient for them to independently issue separate waivers. The California Department of Social Services should have a set of waivers and orders – e.g. a standing order to allow CWS to authorize medical treatment for children with no parent or guardian available to authorize treatment, orders temporarily extending legal timeframes for response to referrals, etc. – ready for the Governor to sign immediately after a disaster event.

	<p>Immediately after a disaster, DFCS will dedicate available resources as needed to continue all State and Federal mandated services. The essential functions include</p> <p>Children's Shelter  Child Abuse and Neglect Center (CANC) and Emergency Response (ER)  Dependent Intake Investigations (DI)  Family Maintenance Services (FM)  Family Reunification Services (FR)  Permanency Planning Services (PP)</p>
Essential Function:	8. Staff assignment process
Process Description:	<p>An assessment will be made of the number of staff needed to perform essential functions. Staff performing non-essential functions will be reassigned to essential functions.</p> <p>All DFCS staff members are designated as "Disaster Service Workers." When a disaster is declared, Disaster Service Workers may be assigned to perform activities outside of department operations that promote the protection of public health and safety or the preservation of lives and property. DFCS staff responsibilities may change as reasonable and necessary to help fulfill the Agency's City, State, and Federally mandated response roles. In addition, DFCS has a core of staff volunteers trained in shelter operations who may be dispatched to assist the Red Cross if the need for care and shelter services exceeds Red Cross capacity.</p>
Essential Function:	9. Workload planning
Process Description:	Immediately following a disaster, ensuring the safety and well-being of the Agency's current foster children – especially the medically at-risk – and unaccompanied minors will be the highest priority. Otherwise, DFCS will assign available staff as necessary to fulfill the agency's disaster response functions and maintain continuity of services to existing and new clients.
Essential Function:	10. Alternative locations for operations
Process Description:	If the Julian Campus Building II site is habitable, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be located on the 5th Floor-California Conference Room with support facilities in nearby conference rooms. However, if the Julian Campus Building II is not habitable and/or evacuation has been ordered, the EOC will be located, on a short-term basis, in the Julian Campus Building I. Should the entire Julian Campus remain uninhabitable for an extended period of time, the DFCS EOC will be moved to the Children's Shelter.
Essential Function:	11. Orientation and ongoing training
Process Description:	A. Introduce Staff to the emergency plan and Train Essential Function Managers on Assigned Roles and Responsibilities.

	<p>All SSA staff will be introduced to the Emergency Plan, and a copy of the plan will be placed on the Agency Intranet. All directors and managers included in lines of succession will be given copies of the plan and basic training on how to carry out assignments during an emergency.</p> <p>B. Promote and Coordinate Cross-Training Planning by Essential Functions Each essential function manager has identified non-essential staff who could be cross-trained to carry out the necessary activities and tasks required to carry out essential functions. Managers will identify the need for additional staff resources and promote and coordinate cross-training planning for the essential functions in their respective areas with the Social Service Agency's Staff Development Department.</p> <p>C. Coordinate and Monitor that All Employees Have Received Disaster Service Worker (DSW) Training  All DFCS staff members have been trained regarding their roles as Disaster Service Workers. General DSW training is conducted on an ongoing basis for all SSA employees and includes a video describing the role of the DSW.</p>
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria B:</b>	<b>Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases:</b>
Essential Function:	1. New child welfare investigation process
Process Description:	New child welfare investigations will be conducted in accordance with State and Federal law; however, under extreme circumstances DFCS may seek permission from the court to extend some State and Federal mandated deadlines.
Essential Function:	2. Implementation process for providing new services
Process Description:	Unaccompanied/displaced children will be assisted to reunite with parents, legal guardians or responsible adults within the 5 <sup>th</sup> degree of relatedness. Media will be used to advertise the phone numbers and assistance center(s) identified geographically and staffed by DFCS social worker with GETS and WPS telephone access. Emergency housing will be provided at the Children's Shelter, with assistance from the Red Cross as necessary. Unaccompanied/displaced children will be taken into temporary custody, per Welfare and Institution Code section 300 (b) and/or (g), and remaining in the care of DFCS for 48 judicial hours will be petitioned to the Juvenile Dependency Court for protection.
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria C:</b>	<b>Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster:</b>

Essential Function:	1. Communication structure – staff
Process Description:	<p>Once the emergency operations plan is activated by the Director of the DFCS, the phone tree will be activated immediately. If staff can not be reached in person, managers will leave a message and call the next person on the list. If phone service is interrupted or inoperable, managers will try cellular or pay phones if available. If no essential line of communication is available DFCS will establish runners for dissemination of information. If all attempts fail in contacting the Social Services Agency, then Agency Personnel at the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) should be contacted. All County employees are designated "Disaster Workers."</p> <p>SSA may use email alerts and voice messaging system alerts to announce changes in work assignments.</p>
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	See above.
Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	All the contractor's will be notified through an email distribution process in the event of an emergency. If internet access is not available, DFCS will work with Contracts to contact essential contractors by telephone or in-person as indicated.
Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	<p>In the event of an emergency or disaster situation staff will be instructed to turn their radios to any of the following list of radio stations who will be broadcasting emergency information to and for the General Public:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. KSJO – FM band – 92.3</li> <li>2. KQED – FM band – 88.5</li> <li>3. KCBS – AM band – 740</li> <li>4. KGO – AM band – 810</li> </ol>
Essential Function:	5. Communication frequency
Process Description:	Staff will be apprised daily with updates and more frequently as circumstances indicate.
Essential Function:	6. Communication with media
Process Description:	Media communications will be handled by Governmental Relations and Planning



<b>Essential Function:</b>	7. Communication with volunteers
<b>Process Description:</b>	Recruitment and assignment of emergency volunteers in Santa Clara County is coordinated by CADRE and the Emergency Managers Association. The Social Services Agency is in process of developing an emergency volunteer coordinator position who would be the primary point of contact between agency departments and volunteer agencies.
<b>Essential Function:</b>	8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)
<b>Process Description:</b>	We are in the process of establishing a toll-free number that includes TTY.
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:</b>	<b>Preserve essential program records:</b>
<b>Essential Function:</b>	1. Record preservation process
<b>Process Description:</b>	<p>Julian Building I is the "Super Hub," which means the computer room at Julian is the "heart of all other systems". There are routers and T-1's in the various offices that are connected to the main system and network at Julian. In the event the site at 333 W. Julian Street goes down all offices lose access to systems. IS will have a plan of action in place which prioritizes various systems and in which order they should become available. This prioritization will be derived from what the Agency defines as business priorities. Business operations will function manually, without systems to sustain them for some period of time.</p> <p>Depending on the nature of the disaster or outage the systems could be unavailable for several days. This will necessitate the business operating in back up mode until the systems become available.</p> <p>Backup records can be obtained from:  SSA Information Services  333 W. Julian Street, San José, CA 95110  Phone: (408) 491-6500</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Caseload Listing Reports are available from CWS/CMS and DFCS Supervisors print them on a regular basis to monitor staff's progress on pending cases.</li> <li>■ Closed case files are stored in the DFCS clerical area and at the SSA's Record Retention Center. The building's fire suppression equipment safeguards against destruction of records by fire.</li> </ul>
<b>Essential Function:</b>	2. Use of off-site back-up system
<b>Process Description:</b>	<p>The alternate/preferred option for access to CWS/CMS is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Option 1 - server based (Citrix) access established in Santa Clara County via the local network</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Option 2 - MOU with other county or counties for server based access via the internet and designated laptops via internet or users working in the other county</li> <li>■ Option 3 - VPN access via state adopted CWS/CMS program if nothing else is available</li> <li>■ Active case files are stored at each social worker's desk and are on-line with CWS/CMS.</li> </ul>
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria E:</b>	<b>Coordinate services and share information with other states:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children reporting process
Process Description:	<p>Children placed in Santa Clara County through the ICPC from other states will be provided the same essential functions and process as described in the section on "Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster."</p> <p>In the event of a disaster in another state(s), DFCS social workers will contact receiving state's social workers to ensure that Santa Clara County children placed in other states through the ICPC are provided the same essential functions and process as described in the section on "Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster."</p>
Essential Function:	2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	DFCS and Private and Public Mental Health providers will work together to ensure coordination of services. Interagency agreements and Memoranda of Understanding will be developed in conjunction with County's Continuity of Operations Plan.
Essential Function:	3. Courts
Process Description:	DFCS will follow the protocol established by the Juvenile Dependency Court to ensure continuation of necessary judicial oversight and compliance with laws and rules of court.
Essential Function:	4. Federal partners
Process Description:	Coordination with Federal partners will be conducted through the CDSS.
Essential Function:	5. CDSS
Process Description:	DFCS will follow the requirements established by CDSS to maintain essential services dependent upon CDSS involvement.
Essential Function:	6. Tribes

Process Description:	DFCS will follow the requirements of the ICWA to maintain essential services for American Indian Children.
Essential Function:	7. Volunteers
Process Description:	DFCS will explore the anticipated availability of volunteers from community-based organizations.